

Case 2727

***Coccyzus euleri* Cabanis, 1873 (Aves, Cuculiformes): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of *Coccyzus euleri* Cabanis, 1873, long established in general use for the South American pearly-breasted cuckoo. The name is made invalid by the senior subjective synonym *C. julieni* Lawrence, [1864].

1. The name *Coccyzus julieni* was established by Lawrence, probably in 1864, for a single specimen of a cuckoo found on Sombrero Island, in the north Leeward Islands of the West Indies. In a full description the bird was characterised by small size, white under the wings and absence of rufous colour in the primary wing feathers. The specimen is now in the American Museum of Natural History (cat. no. AMNH 44495); it is a young bird of unknown sex and lacks its original label.

2. The serial volume in which Lawrence's paper (which included the new specific name *julieni*) was published is dated 1867. However, the foot of the first page (p. 42, ref. a) of the paper bears the date 1864 in small type and the paper is listed in *The Royal Society Catalogue of Scientific Papers* (1879, p. 176) with two dates: '[1864]' for the paper itself and '1867' when citing the serial volume. Lawrence's paper is listed (p. 56) in the first volume (for 1864) of *The Record of Zoological Literature*, published in 1865. Peters (1940, p. 42) adopted the date 1864, as have other authors.

3. *Coccyzus julieni* was considered by Hellmayr (1929, p. 432) as a possible junior synonym of *C. americanus* (Linnaeus, 1758, p. 111), the yellow-billed cuckoo, which has the type locality of South Carolina, U.S.A. *C. julieni* was also listed as a synonym of *americanus* by Laubmann (1939, p. 189), Peters (1940, p. 42), Griscom & Greenway (1941, p. 150), and Steinbacher (1962, p. 55). It was thought to be a subspecies of *americanus* by Cory (1919, p. 335), Gyldenstolpe (1945, p. 90) and Steullet & Deautier (1945, p. 779).

4. Banks (1988, p. 87), however, thought that the identification of *julieni* as *americanus* was incorrect and that, following a direct comparison with a series of specimens of the North American *C. americanus* and the South American species *C. euleri* Cabanis, 1873, the single specimen of *julieni* was unquestionably to be identified as the South American species. *C. euleri* (originally published with the spelling error *Coccygus*) is the pearly-breasted, or southern yellow-billed, cuckoo, a bird described (p. 72) from Cantagalo, Rio de Janeiro State, southeastern Brazil. Type material is in the collections of the zoological museum in Berlin. Ridgway (1916, p. 20), Pinto (1964, p. 169) and Greenway (1978, p. 112) had previously indicated that *julieni* was to be identified with the species *euleri*. Banks (1988) suggested that the type

specimen of *julieni* was almost certainly a vagrant individual of *euleri*. This species migrates north to Surinam (Haverschmidt, 1968, p. 150), Guyana (Chubb, 1916, p. 438), Venezuela (Cherrie, 1916, p. 311) and Colombia (Hilty & Brown, 1986, p. 217). The bird collected was found hiding in a crevice on a rocky islet (Lawrence, p. 98, ref. b), an inappropriate situation for a species that normally inhabits forest or scrub canopy and edge.

5. The specific name *julieni* Lawrence, [1864] is a senior subjective synonym of *euleri* Cabanis, 1873. Ridgway (1916, p. 20), Pinto (1964, p. 169) and Banks (1988, p. 90) adopted *julieni* on the grounds of priority, although Greenway (1978, p. 112) wrote '*julieni*, now *euleri*'. Pinto later (1978, p. 155) used only the name *euleri* without comment, even though including the type locality of *julieni*. The name *Coccyzus euleri* Cabanis, 1873 has been used consistently for the South American pearly-breasted cuckoo. Authors of major check-lists who have used the name include Peters (1940, p. 42), Meyer de Schauensee (1970, p. 112, pl. 24, and the later edition of 1982) and Walters (1980, p. 83). A representative list of more than 30 references, principally covering the last 50 years, is held by the Commission Secretariat. This includes a number of guides and catalogues to the birds of South American countries. Acceptance of the name *julieni* Lawrence, [1864] in place of *euleri* Cabanis, 1873 would upset stability of usage in the extensive literature, especially in South America.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *julieni* Lawrence, [1864], as published in the binomen *Coccyzus julieni*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *euleri* Cabanis, 1873, as published in the binomen *Coccygus* (= *Coccyzus*) *euleri*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *julieni* Lawrence, [1864], as published in the binomen *Coccyzus julieni*, and as suppressed in (1) above.

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